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1960-09-27, Bette to Parents

Bette J. Barto

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Subject Terms

Women and the military, Women and war, United States -- Air Force, United States -- Army -- Air Forces, Photographs, Armed Forces -- Correspondence, Correspondence -- Vietnam War -- 1961-1975, Christmas

Summary

This collection contains 139 correspondence from Maj. Bette J. Barto, USAFE to her parents while serving as a nurse during the late 1950s and 1960s. Also included are three photographs, one special orders document, and one marriage license. In several cases, Bette refers to her parents as "Lizzie" and "Hugh Elmer," or simply "Elmer." Three letters from 1961 or 1962 are undated and placed in a separate folder.

Keywords

1960-09-27

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27 Sept. 60.

Tuesday afternoon
4^{PM}

Dear Mom and Daddy,

I got your newspaper and letter, Daddy. Thanks a lot and I'm glad you feel good enough to hurt a little and go visit.

Mom, I received the Merry Widow and the beautiful blue p.f.'s. They both fit like a dream. I'll enclose a check. Thank you for the bathers. Now, I'll need only one thing else. I would like to have my white gown and the negligee and the white satin shoes. They are all in my cedar chest. The gown & negligee are both wrapped (separately) in that blue tissue paper and the shoes are in white, I think.

Ray will be coming about 2 wks from now, I hope. I heard from him yesterday and everything is finally falling into place. He has no anticipation of difficulty in getting the leave either.

We are still trying to get by the L. Ryan red tape of waiting 18 days after he arrives before getting married, but may not

be able to avoid it. We are now investigating the possibility of marriage beyond the 3 mile limit over the Mediterranean. We think the International Law of the High Seas maybe could apply in our case. Like being married by a sea captain, we may be able to get an airplane to fly us 3 miles out with the Chaplain and our witness and be married over the Med. This way, Libyan law would not apply. Ill let you know if it can be done. I went to the Chaplain today. He thought it was a wonderful idea, but we must be certain its legal.

I bought my wedding dress in downtown Tripoli Saturday. It is a white, Italian-knit dress - street length - very beautiful. It is perfect for a wedding and still it will be a good dress for years. I'll try to draw a diagram:



← the dark part is to signify white stitching. Its all white & 2 piece; fitted, & the 2 buttons at the hip line are covered in white-knit also.

I will wear³ a white feathered
hat (little tiny thing that hugs
the crown of my head) - its borrowed
from Jerry, the girl I go to town
with to shop and have my hair
done. She brought it from Paris.
I plan to wear black suede
high heels & ~~a~~ ~~hat~~ gloves (white).
This is for the downtown ceremony
if we have to have it. If we marry
on the place, we will be in uniform,
and if we have a #2 Ceremony
on base we will wear uniforms.
Complicated isn't it? But if we
get married with this much knot-
tying, it won't be likely we'll
ever untie it, this is for sure,
anyway.

I haven't mailed Helen's stuff
yet. I have had to start doing
all my own washing & ironing. This
last week. My Italian maid who
did my linens and sport clothes
left for Italy. You know how I
hate ironing! I washed 1/2 day
Saturday and its back with a
wringing machine and only a kitchen
sink to rinse the clothes in. I
even did all my white rugs and
my white bedspread. I have to iron
allrite forite. Grrrrr!

No word yet on what date I'll be coming home. I am having some trouble with being assigned to Seymour. They are trying to send me to a base in Missouri. I have already applied for a diversion to Seymour and I sent Ray a telegram so he could call Col. Graham at the Pentagon. This makes our getting married now all the more necessary. I just couldn't face a 2-3 mo. separation after I come home, while I get transferred. So keep your fingers crossed that we can get it changed, before they cut my orders for Missouri.

I'll close for now and get a few things done. I'm cooking Ravi ham and eggs for Jane and Ann tonight. Jane's friend, Chuck, has rotated to the States too; so she's kinda lonely too. She isn't sure she wants to get married, so she stayed here to decide. I'm glad there's no question in my mind about Ray. My only one is "How soon?"

I miss you; Tell Mary Ann I will write. I have her Christmas doll already. It's a beauty.
Love,
Betty

check enclosed!